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ABSTRACT

This manual is designed for those who are responsible for recruiting and counseling disadvantaged youth who have terminated their education before graduation. The first of six chapters presents an overview of the manual, discusses recent federal legislation that has focused on unemployment, and defines terms used in the manual. Chapter 2 describes strategies and practices used to identify and attract disadvantaged, unemployed, and out-of-school youth into vocational programs. Four major areas of practices are included: referrals, mass media, decentralized efforts, and social prestige. Focusing on the role of counseling in vocational training programs, six counseling practices are outlined in chapter 3: intake, assessment and information sharing, orientation, monitoring and support during training, job readiness, and follow-up. Chapter 4 lists reference points or benchmarks by which student and program success are measured. Following a summary chapter, the final chapter contains a list of additional readings, a chronological list of federal legislation, and a list of example programs that recruit and counsel disadvantaged, unemployed, and out-of-school youth. (LRA)

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Research and Development Series No. 185

BRIDGES TO EMPLOYMENT

RECRUITMENT AND COUNSELING PRACTICES FOR DISADVANTAGED, UNEMPLOYED, OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH IN VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Book One

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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FOREWORD

Statistics from the Drop-Out Report of the New York City Public Schools 1978 state that 45 percent of the potential seniors leave school before graduation. Most of the drop-outs are disadvantaged urban youth. What happens to them is a major concern of educators and the public alike. How to reach these youth so that they have an opportunity to learn about careers, survival, and coping skills is a major responsibility of vocational educators.

This manual is designed for those who are responsible for recruiting and counseling disadvantaged youth who have terminated their education before graduation. It highlights and discusses recruitment practices that have been used successfully to attract disadvantaged, unemployed, out-of-school youth and counseling practices to aid in the educational process when they have returned to vocational programs. The manual also explains how recruitment and counseling can be facilitated and discusses various ways to determine progress. Administrators, teachers, counselors, and others who work with disadvantaged, unemployed youth will find this manual a necessary aid.

Dr. Patricia Worthy Winkfield directed the project. Dr. Karin Stork-Whitson assisted in the design and implementation of the procedures. Special recognition is extended to Gary Ripple, graduate research associate, who made a major contribution to developmental activities.

The project staff express their appreciation to the vocational program personnel who gave their time to meet with staff during site visits as well as the many practitioners who provided additional input to the project. A list of the vocational programs and personnel visited is included in the "Program Listing by State." Special thanks are due Dr. Lucille Campbell Thrane, division associate director; Dr. Barbara Sethney Vorndran, program coordinator; and Cindy Silvani Lacey, program associate, for their critique of the manual.

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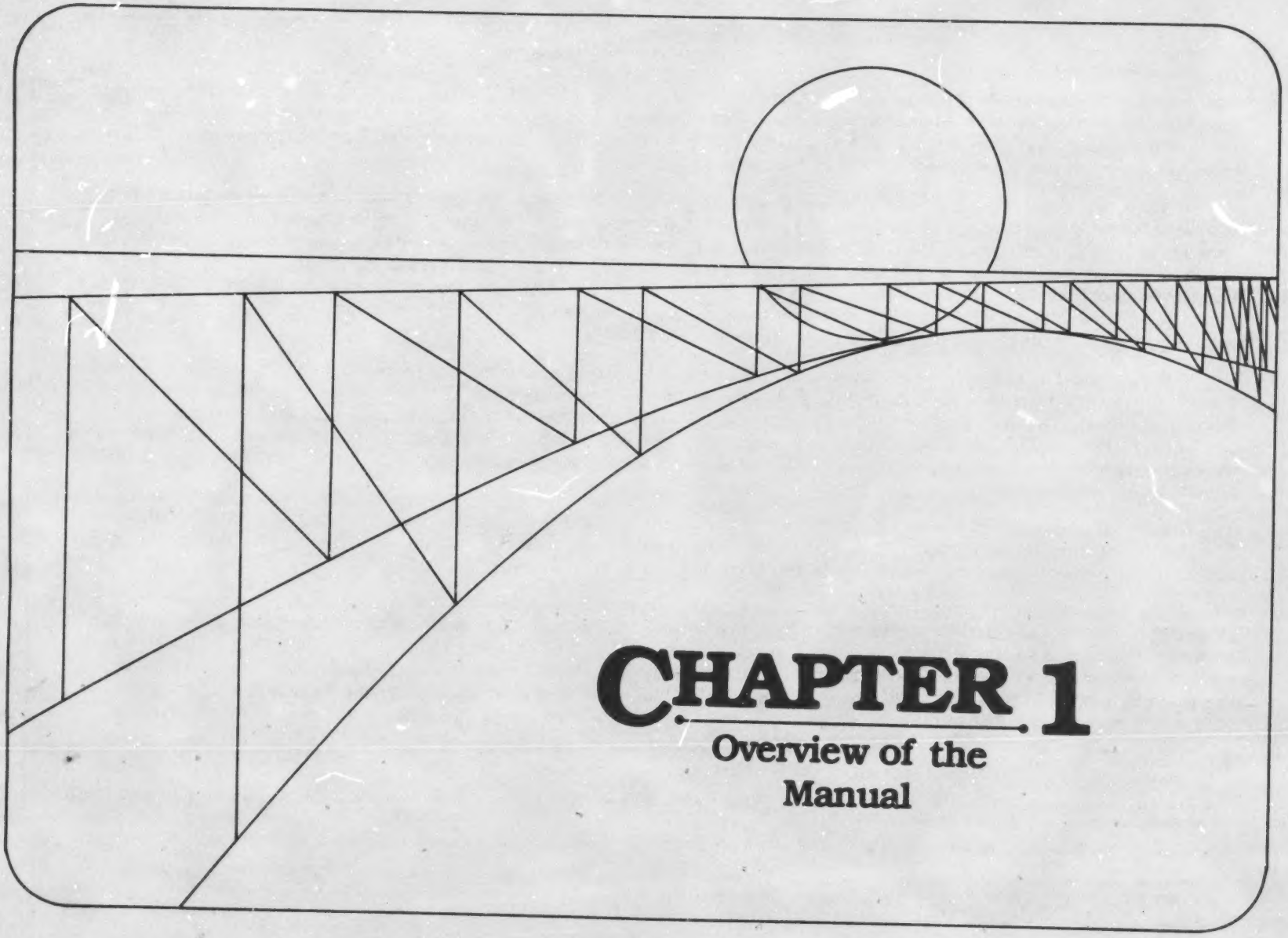
This manual is the first of a two-part series entitled *Bridges to Employment.* The second manual in the series addresses job development, placement, and follow-through practices for unemployed youth for vocational education.

Robert E. Taylor
Executive Director
The National Center for Research in Vocational Education



CHAPTER 1

Overview of the Manual

I. OVERVIEW OF THE MANUAL

A critical concern of educators during the 1970s has been the number of youth leaving school before completing requirements for a high school diploma and before obtaining salable skills. Higgins documents the extensiveness of the problem. "More than half the total number of unemployed in our country are under 24 years of age. While teenagers account for about one-tenth of the nation's labor force, they represent almost one-quarter of the unemployed."[1]

The problem of youth unemployment is even greater for youth burdened with economic and educational disadvantages. It is estimated that at least 30 percent of disadvantaged youth are unemployed and out of school. In some inner urban areas with high numbers of disadvantaged youth, the rate rises to between 40 and 50 percent. Those disadvantaged youth who are presently out of school and unemployed face almost certain continuing unemployment and limited (arrested) career development.[2] This population leaves school before obtaining adequate skills to acquire and maintain a job that pays more than the minimum wage. Out-of-school youth who become employed find that they must serve as "unskilled workers" and are usually the first to be released from employment in times of budget cuts or decreases in production demands.

Although this population of disadvantaged, unemployed, out-of-school youth did not receive the necessary skills to enhance their employability while they were in school, they need not continue to be unskilled with little chance for lasting employment. Vocational educators are realizing that this target population has been neglected far too long. Jensen reports on a national study conducted by Parsons which concluded that over 5 million disadvantaged students at the secondary level had needs that were not met by vocational education. The study also pointed out that approximately 4.5 million disadvantaged, out-of-school youth were not being served by vocational education.[3]

Vocational educators can work toward offering this population an opportunity to attain skills necessary for employment. Lee continues, "Vocational education could and should assume a prominent role in assisting youths in developing the prerequisite capabilities for initially entering work and expanding the initial entry into a successful career."[4]

Any attempt to decrease the unemployment rate of disadvantaged, out-of-school youth and utilize their valuable resources will require that educators give particular attention to helping them acquire necessary skills to render them more employable. In spite of present programmatic advances, there is a pressing need for more productive ways to reach unemployed, out-of-school youth and increase their awareness of benefits and options available through vocational education. Practices must be used to aid vocational practitioners in recruiting disadvantaged, unemployed, out-of-school youth to programs and providing them with counseling services to facilitate their performance in the program and completion of training—thus providing the necessary "bridges to employment".

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[1] Kitty Higgins, "The Youth Employment Act: What Is It," *American Vocational Journal* 53 (January 1978): 42.

[2] Jasper S. Lee, "Youths: Work Entry through Vocational Education," *Vocational Education for Special Groups. American Vocational Association Sixth Yearbook* (Washington, D.C., American Vocational Association, 1976), pp. 182-183.

[3] Richard N. Jensen, "Equal Access for the Disadvantaged: The Need to Break Some Barriers," *American Vocational Journal* (September 1977): 28-30, 36.

[4] Jasper S. Lee, "Youths: Work Entry through Vocational Education." *Vocational Education for Special Groups. American Vocational Association Sixth Yearbook* (Washington, D.C., American Vocational Association, 1976), p. 182.

Who It's For

Do you know or work with unemployed youth or young adults? Then this manual is for you. If you are a program administrator, teacher, counselor, or student personnel coordinator; or if you are responsible for recruiting, counseling, or providing vocational services for youth who are disadvantaged, unemployed, and out of school, the information in this manual will provide new insights for success in helping the "socioeconomically handicapped."[5] The responsibility for recruitment and counseling of students may be the direct duty of a program staff person (specifically outlined in a job description), or it may be a task that staff members readily assume as part of their extended role in serving students.

How It Can Help

In the past five years, new developments in education and government have emphasized the fact that vocational education has not adequately served young people who are educationally and economically disadvantaged. Programs sponsored by sources outside of the traditional vocational education system (i.e., CETA and adult skills centers) have employed staff with experience in working with the target population. Recent legislation has mandated improved vocational services for the disadvantaged. Professional vocational education associations have established divisions and committees to study the concerns for disadvantaged populations. It is our responsibility to make sure that these young people increase their skills and improve their employability through vocational programs. This manual is designed to aid practitioners in traditional vocational programs and other settings, who are inexperienced in working with disadvantaged youth in vocational programs. *Bridges to Employment* will help you to help disadvantaged youth through the critical transition to the world of work.

What It Includes

The manual highlights

- selected recruiting practices that are successful in attracting disadvantaged, unemployed, out-of-school youth to vocational programs; and
- counseling practices to help them complete vocational programs.

It describes

- special considerations in recruiting and counseling the disadvantaged;
- recommended improvements or changes for recruiting and counseling; and
- benchmarks for measuring success or progress.

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[5] *Vocational Education Act of 1963,* Public Law 88-210 (December 18, 1963).

Vocational educators will find the suggested recommendations for improving vocational programs for the disadvantaged of particular interest.

The appendices include a list of additional readings and resources for practitioners who want to explore the topic further. The alphabetical program listing provides an address and a person to contact for more detailed information about each of the fourteen programs visited.

What the Legislation Says

During the sixties and seventies, the federal government's response to the problem of unemployment was voiced through the enactment of numerous laws to combat the pressures of joblessness for a growing number of youth and adults. The intent of legislation has been the development of skilled and labor-market-ready human resources.

Much of the legislation in the 1960s had an "antipoverty" emphasis. In 1962, the Manpower Development and Training Act (MDTA) was passed to provide retraining for individuals who were jobless as a result of technological advances or changes in the economy. Amendments to the act shifted the focus to include job seeking and job maintenance skills in addition to occupational training. Skill building was no longer the primary legislative emphasis, particularly when individuals to be trained or retrained were defined as disadvantaged. According to Mangum and Walsh, an individual "under 21 or over 44 years of age; having less than a high school education; being a member of a minority group; being physically or mentally handicapped" may be classified as disadvantaged.[6]

In 1964, the Economic Opportunity Act created a variety of programs to lower unemployment rates among disadvantaged youth and adults. Sponsored programs included (1) Jobs in the Business Sector, promoted by the National Alliance of Business (NABS–JOBS); (2) the Job Corps; and (3) the Neighborhood Youth Corps. These programs emphasized the development of employability (job seeking and job maintenance) skills as well as occupational competencies.

The Vocational Education Act of 1963 sought to respond to the needs of diverse segments of the population for vocational training for employment. The legislation broadened the focus of vocational education to recognize the special needs of the disadvantaged, minority groups, and the handicapped.

The Vocational Education Amendments of 1968 expanded and strengthened provisions of the 1963 act to serve specified populations. In addition, the amendments authorized state level grant programs to give priority to certain programs to train or retrain high school students and out-of-school youth. The amendments specifically named those who could not succeed in a regular vocational program because of academic, socioeconomic, or other handicaps. Vocational guidance and counseling were expanded to more adequately support the identified groups in selecting and preparing for employment.

In 1973, P.L. 93-203, the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) established a system of state and local programs to provide job training, employment opportunities, and community services for the economically disadvantaged. The major goals of the program were productive employment and self-sufficiency. In CETA legislation the responsibility for planning and administering manpower programs was shifted from the federal level to state and local governments.

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[6] Garth Mangum and John Walsh, *A Decade of Manpower Development and Training* (Salt Lake City, UT: Olympus Publishing Company, 1973), p. 10.

P.L. 94-482, The Education Amendments of 1976, emphasized the importance of guidance and counseling in vocational programs. Section 110 of the act required that at least 20 percent of the vocational education funds available to states be used for the disadvantaged with the express purpose of guaranteeing opportunities through linkages with community-based organizations. Section 140 of the act requires funding to be targeted to areas with high concentrations of youth unemployment and school dropouts to be used to pay the full cost of vocational education for disadvantaged persons.

The 1978 amendments to the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) strengthened the role of local planning councils. The amendments also established local industry job councils to assist in creating private sector jobs.

Title XIII, Part A, of the Education Amendments of 1978 expanded and revised the Adult Education Act of 1970 to provide basic education for those adults who lack the fundamental skills to function minimally in our society. The amendments extended adult basic education programs to residents of rural areas and to those residents of urban areas with high unemployment rates, to adults with limited English proficiency, and to those who are institutionalized. Programs were to be developed through strong community and business/industry/labor linkages.

What does all this legislation mean? Some legislation is intended to have immediate impact on the problem of unemployment. Programs funded through CETA and YEDPA have created jobs and provided the means to get people into these jobs. Such programs are called "demonstration projects" and are funded to meet immediate needs and provide information for long-range planning. Other legislation is geared to long-term planning and development efforts. The Vocational Education Act of 1963 and subsequent amendments provide a framework for strengthening existing programs and creating new programs.

The legislation discussed in this section is only a small part of the existing legislation designed to combat the problem of unemployment. It is important to understand the legislation so you can use it to provide better education and employment opportunities for your students.

Working Definitions

To assist you, the following terms are defined as they are used in this manual.

Counseling – providing employment information and personal guidance in individual or group settings.

Disadvantaged – persons (other than the physically or mentally handicapped) who have academic or economic handicaps and who require special support services and assistance to succeed.

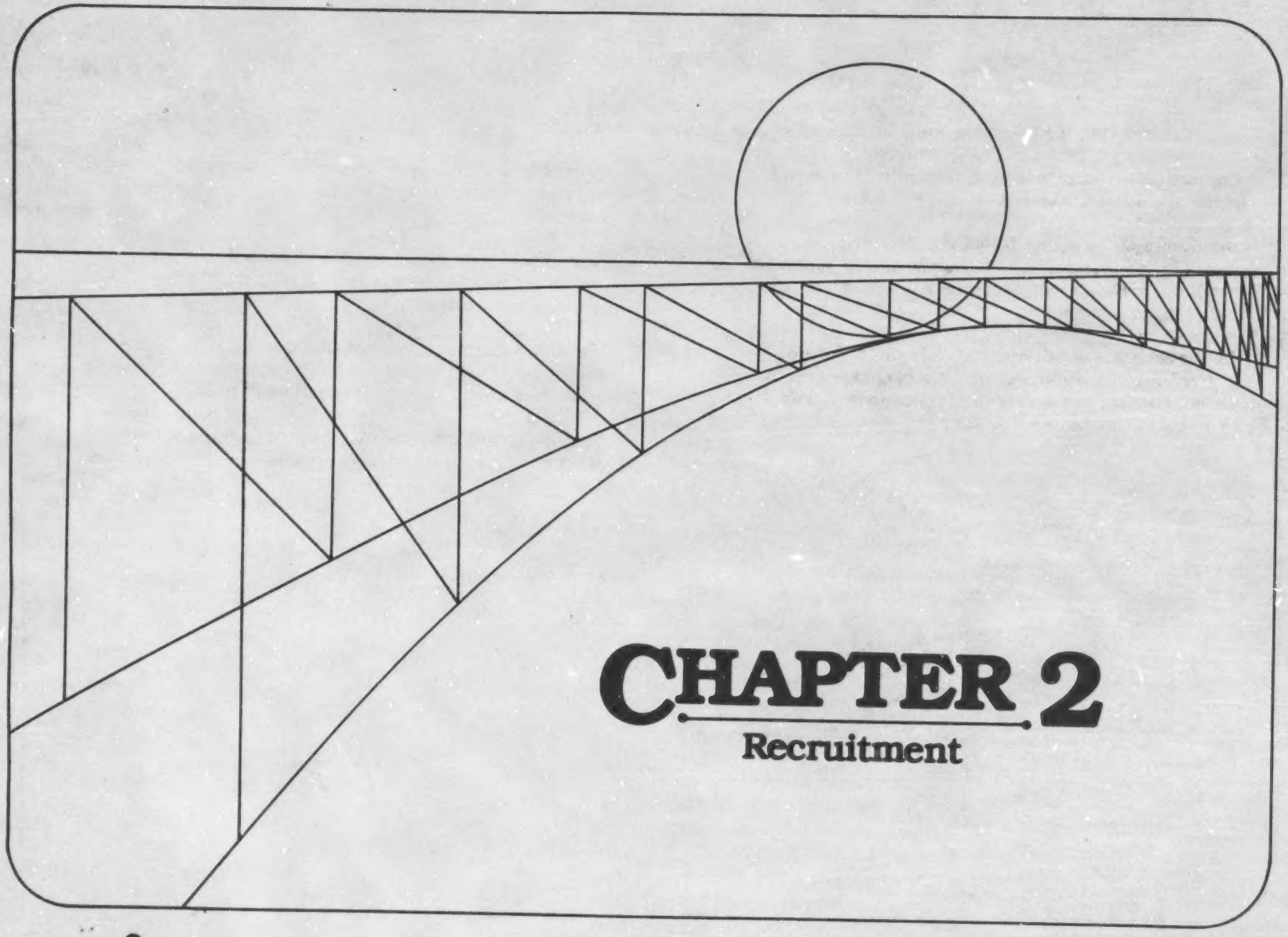
Out-of-School – youth who have left school before high school graduation and high school graduates who are not enrolled in any organized educational program of study and are not employed.

Practice – any strategy or activity designed to recruit and counsel disadvantaged, unemployed, out-of-school youth.

Recruitment – strategies and practices used to identify and attract disadvantaged, unemployed, out-of-school youth into vocational programs.

Vocational education – organized educational programs that prepare or retrain individuals for employment requiring other than a baccalaureate or advanced degree.

Youth – a developmental stage beginning in the middle or upper teens and extending into the early or mid-twenties.



CHAPTER 2

Recruitment

II. RECRUITMENT

Special attention should be directed to the recruitment of disadvantaged, unemployed, out-of-school youth into vocational programs. These youth are most likely to be unaware of vocational options available to them and they do not obtain necessary information about vocational programs through formal and informal channels.

The following section of the manual describes strategies and practices used to identify and attract disadvantaged, unemployed, out-of-school youth into vocational programs. Four major areas of practices are included:

- Referrals
- Mass media
- Decentralized efforts
- Social prestige

Each practice description outlines *what* is done in the implementation of the practice, *how* it can be done, and *when* it can be done. The information included in this section on recruitment practices was collected from various sources including conversations during site visits with vocational program personnel, input from practitioners in the field, and related research. Conversations with vocational program personnel revealed a number of concerns or problems that must be addressed when implementing the recruitment practices described in this manual. Program staff were able to recommend ways to lessen barriers found in implementing the practices.

Referrals

The two general categories of referrals included in the discussion of this practice are agency referrals and personal referrals.

Agency Referrals

What is done? Agency referrals provide a source of participants for many programs serving the disadvantaged, unemployed, out-of-school youth population. Personnel from various social service agencies within the community refer clients to training programs to upgrade their employability skills. Effective use of this practice necessitates cooperative community efforts and linkages among staff from a vast number of agencies.

- Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA)
- Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA)
- Neighborhood associations
- Correctional facilities
- Churches
- Cooperative extension services
- Public assistance departments
- City schools
- Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation (BVR)
- Goodwill Industries
- Veterans Administration
- Community health centers

One special benefit of using this practice is that clients can often receive funding from the agency for vocational training.

How is it done? Referrals can be facilitated when the vocational program staff familiarize agency personnel with services they can provide to clients. This can be done by visiting agencies to meet with staff and describe services available to clients in the vocational program. If personal visits cannot be made, other alternatives are available.

- An "open house" inviting agency personnel to visit the program facility to meet with staff and students to *see* what services are available
- Telephone calls to agency personnel to discuss the vocational program offerings provided to clients
- Mailings of brochures and pamphlets to agencies that describe the services that clients can receive in vocational programs

The referral of clients by an agency can be done in a number of ways. Public school and state education department personnel work together to compile lists of students that have left school before graduation and make this list available to local vocational programs. Referral cards are often given to agency clients to introduce them to vocational program personnel.

The referral cards are mailed to vocational program staff by agency personnel to allow staff to contact clients by telephone or visit their homes. A less formal method involves telephone calls by agency personnel to vocational program staff to identify clients that will be contacting them by telephone or in person. This type of "prior notice" of potential clients allows staff to space program entry to accommodate all students that are interested.

Planning of this type permits program staff to project the number of new clients they will be able to serve in each training area. Many vocational programs that have been in operation for many years have waiting lists of interested students and can accept only a limited number of new students as space becomes available. Program staff are in continuous contact with agency personnel to notify them of available space in specific training areas. If an agency does not respond by filling its allotted number of spaces in the vocational program within a specified period of time, the slots are given to other agencies that do have interested clients.

When is it done? Agency referrals are made when a social service worker finds that a client has needs that can be best met by a program outside of the agency. Social service agencies are generally designed to meet the medical, financial, social, and psychological needs of clients. Many of these needs are linked to inadequate training for work, underemployment, and unemployment. If problems are identified that are not within the scope of the services offered by the agency, referral is needed.

Many vocational programs rely on agency referrals and are in daily contact with agency personnel. Other programs that have been in existence for a long period of time and are well known in the local community use agency referrals as the need arises--when enrollments are low in a particular program area--and not as their primary source for potential clients.

Personal Referrals

What is done? Personal referrals are of two major types—peer and family. Potential clients (out-of-school youth) are informed of the vocational program by current and former students and family members. This practice can be effective because it involves personal contact. The peer or family member making the referral is often very aware of the particular needs and interests of the potential client and can suggest programs that may meet these needs.

How is it done? Current vocational students are encouraged to bring their friends and family members to such program activities as "buddy day" to tour the facilities and talk with other students and staff members. As students complete vocational programs, they are asked to replace themselves with a new student.

When is it done? Personal referrals are made on a continuous basis and are the source of many "walk-ins"—potential clients visiting the program to inquire about services offered and entry procedures. If a prospective client is unaware of his or her vocational options, another student in the program can give valuable insight and share personal experiences. This informal technique often reaches people who would not otherwise hear about the vocational program through structured public information channels such as newspapers, brochures, and announcements.

Considerations

1. Secondary vocational programs must change in order to meet the needs of the unemployed youth.
   - Programs are not flexible in scheduling, rules and regulations are rigid, and formality of class procedures is threatening.
   - Unemployed youth function at different developmental life stages than "typical" secondary students.
2. Potential students are misinformed because they are not alerted to special requirements such as
   - minimum levels of reading and math proficiency;
   - age limitation (minimum age of 17.5); and
   - transportation to work experience sites.
3. Vocational program staff are not able to serve needs of all potential students because of a lack of training stations.

Recommendations

1. Vocational educators must be aware of the characteristics, the value systems, and the ethnic background of unemployed youth in order to understand why traditional vocational programs are threatening to them.
   - Unemployed youth need to be aware of the consequences of attitudes and behaviors that are different from middle-class norms accepted in the world of work. Basic instruction in the use of alarm clocks, good nutrition, and appropriate dress for the job needs to be provided.
   - Staff development for vocational educators is necessary so that they know and appreciate the special needs of older students.
   - Special services (parenting classes, consumer economics, marriage counseling) are essential to assist the unemployed youth who functions in multiple roles.
2. Vocational program staff must design techniques to assist unemployed youth to gain access into regular programs by providing
   - remedial services in non-threatening environments in order to upgrade and prepare youth;
   - individualized instruction at appropriate learning levels;
   - bilingual personnel and material when necessary; and
   - services of paraprofessionals to increase the student/teacher ratio.
3. More funding needs to be provided in order to
   - enlarge facilities;
   - increase number of training stations; and
   - remove physical barriers.

Mass Media

Written and oral communication are involved in using mass media as a recruitment practice.

Written Communication

What is done? Written forms of mass communication include the following:

- Newspaper announcements
- Fliers
- Brochures
- Leaflets
- Letters

These encourage out-of-school youth to investigate and become part of the vocational program. Billboards, posters, and displays placed at various locations in the community help to build community awareness in addition to serving as a recruitment technique.

How is it done? Information packets describing the vocational offerings of the program, admission procedures, class hours, and length of time required for completion are mailed to social service agencies and school counselors for distribution to potential clients. A technique used in elementary schools requires the aid of young children. Brochures and leaflets are sent home to families with elementary-school-age children who tend to be dependable in delivering the materials to their families.

News releases are prepared by program staff and mailed to *all* newspapers in the area. It is important to include small newspapers in the disadvantaged community which are often more widely read by the target population than the larger city-wide newspaper.

When is it done? Various forms of written communication are used as recruitment techniques on an "as needed" basis to recruit program participants and disseminate information. Written communication is used extensively at the beginning of each term to create classes and fill vacancies as they arise. This practice is used because of the relatively low cost and potential for wide exposure of the program.

Oral Communication

What is done? Oral communication can be very effective in reaching potential students who would not respond to written advertisements in newspapers and brochures. Examples of this type of communication include the following:

- Radio and television
- Discussion meetings
- Speaking engagements
- Job fairs
- Display booths
- Open houses

How is it done? Vocational program staff contact local television and radio community relations directors to develop advertisements for public service announcements. Audiovisual aids such as slides with "voice overs" and tapes of students and staff can be used to promote the vocational program. One way of involving potential clients on a personal basis is to hold discussion meetings and lectures at neighborhood sites (churches and recreation centers) to talk about the vocational program and answer questions. In addition, staff and student participation in job fairs and education displays allows potential clients to make contact with individuals in the program. Although this type of contact is brief, it is important because potential students are able to identify the program with people who have shown an interest in them.

Another opportunity for personal contact between the training program staff and the target population is an open house held at the vocational facility. This advertised event is an open invitation to the community to visit the program facility to experience a "show and tell."

Local employers and community leaders, as well as potential students, should be encouraged to visit the program. Possible results of increased communication with employers and leaders in the community could be

- work study slots for students;
- job placement for program graduates;
- lobbyists for increased program funding; and
- donations of equipment and training sites.

When is it done? Regularly scheduled oral communication is a very effective recruitment tool. Open houses, meetings, and job fairs can be scheduled monthly or bi-monthly to allow potential students to feel at ease with staff and confident with their decisions once they enter the program.

Considerations	Recommendations
1. News media are reluctant to provide public service advertising to announce the availability of vocational programs.	1. Vocational educators should work closely with public relations staff of local news media services to • prepare news releases; • provide necessary information so that the agency is not flooded by additional calls that may be of interest to potential students; • provide satellite recruitment stations at the specific time of announcement in public facilities such as post offices or shopping centers for easy access by potential students; • identify sources for paid classified advertising; and • provide announcement services for persons who are deaf or have limited English proficiency.

Decentralized Efforts

Decentralized recruitment efforts consist of outreach activities in the local community.

Community Outreach

What is done? Community outreach is a basic component of any vocational program for disadvantaged, unemployed, out-of-school youth. This practice can be performed by

- vocational program staff;
- current students; and
- neighborhood residents.

Program staff and current students recruit potential participants in the disadvantaged community. The emphasis is on face-to-face contact with prospective clients. This practice is greatly facilitated as program personnel become well known in the neighborhood. Once the program has gained the acceptance and endorsement of community organizations and youth clubs, the members of these groups can be effective in recruiting new vocational students.

How is it done? Program staff contact social service agency staff, school personnel, employers, and community residents. Program counselors set up satellite offices in neighborhood centers to talk with youth about their vocational needs and interests, various options available to them, and program entrance procedures.

Periodic use of motor vehicles for recruitment purposes enables the program staff to cover the entire community, build interest, and gain increased exposure. When the counselor and other program staff work in the community they become familiar to the residents, other professionals, and youth, and a feeling of trust is developed. Face-to-face recruitment is effective because it gives program staff a first-hand look at individuals in their own environment and provides clues to the influence that environment may have on the occupational needs, interests, and goals of youth.

When is it done? Outreach as a decentralized recruitment effort can be a daily activity or a scheduled task (once or twice a week) for staff to identify and follow up potential clients. Temporary satellite centers can be set up on a monthly or quarterly basis or during special community events for the purpose of program intake. The regular use of this recruitment practice enables the vocational program staff to take services out into the community and obtain community participation. Community outreach provides easier access to services for the disadvantaged in an informal setting.

Considerations

1. Constraints placed upon vocational staff that limit the amount of personal contact they can have with prospective students include the following:
   - time available for making personal recruitment contacts;
   - number of staff available to recruit; and
   - additional responsibilities.
2. Supervisory control over staff when they work out in neighborhoods is minimal.
3. Current students, active in recruitment, sometimes present potential students with a biased opinion about the vocational programs.

Recommendations

1. Staff can be expanded by using current students, neighborhood residents, and volunteers from churches and community agencies as outreach workers in the community.
   - Restructure schedules of staff to permit them to contact and orient additional outreach workers within communities.
2. The key to an effective decentralized recruitment effort lies with trustworthy, responsible, well-trained outreach workers.
   - Design staff development programs to teach staff to do a better job of outreach and to work with current students and neighborhood residents to increase recruitment efforts.
   - Develop recruitment materials in a style to fit the neighborhood in which they will be used.
3. Make sure that students or outreach workers have a well-planned and organized brochure or other piece of literature from which to speak.

Social Prestige

Special incentives help potential students to view the vocational program as a "good" and desirable experience.

Incentives

What is done? It is important that the disadvantaged, unemployed, out-of-school youth perceive the vocational program as having prestige. Because society tends to measure a person's worth by type of work involvement, the *unemployed* youth may have a low self-esteem. Incentives such as

- awards and special recognitions;
- membership in youth clubs; and
- work/study assignments

can be instrumental in changing the personal outlook of unemployed youth.

Personal forces have a strong bearing on the occupational future of all people, including disadvantaged, unemployed, out-of-school youth. Program personnel should stress that the vocational program is not for "rejects" but is for those youth who *want* to succeed and increase their chances for employment.

How is it done? Awards and special recognition can be given to students for good attendance records and improvements in grades and skill competence. Additional accomplishments such as outstanding human relations skills and placement on a job should also be recognized. These awards can be made in recognition assemblies open to all current students, prospective students, families, and friends as well as local employers and business leaders. Gifts and monetary awards in addition to plaques and trophies can be presented to students for their achievements. Student award selections should be made by peers (other vocational students) as well as program staff.

Fund-raising projects such as raffles, bake sales, and car washes can be held to provide money for the awards and the purchase of equipment and tools for vocational training areas. These fund-raising activities can be organized within each vocational training area and spark an "esprit de corps" among students.

A work/study assignment may provide a much needed incentive for unemployed youth. Such assignments serve as preparation for later full-time employment and, in addition, provide financial rewards to the student. It is possible that the work/study assignment may turn into a permanent job after completion of training.

Vocational youth groups can help to develop motivation and positive attitudes in unemployed youth. An example of a youth organization is Seventy Thousand and One Career Association (SEVCA), which is an outgrowth of 70,001 Ltd.—a national employment and training program. Each local 70,001 Ltd. program has a SEVCA chapter with elected officers. There is also a national leadership team which is elected by SEVCA members. National and regional seminars are held for group members, and a quarterly magazine is published. The youth organization is designed to promote the social, civic, and professional development of youth. It is a vehicle by which achievements of youth are rewarded.

Although SEVCA is a national organization, the same idea for vocational youth groups can be organized within local programs with similar objectives. Several vocational programs within an area (city or county) could cooperate to form a vocational youth club for their students.

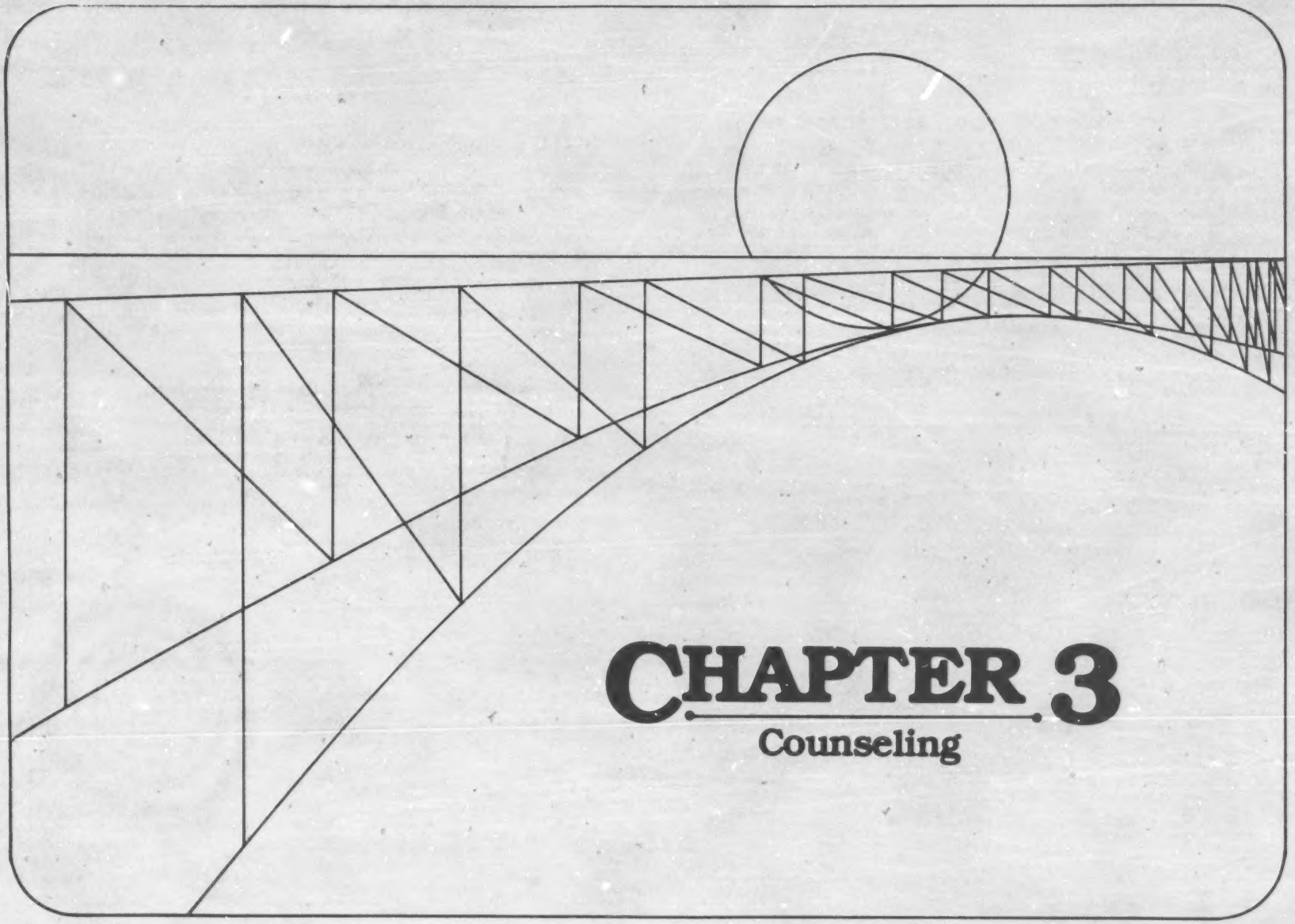
When is it done? Potential students should be informed of the various rewards that add to the social prestige of the program. Techniques to increase the social prestige of the vocational program can be used daily with current students because of their value in improving self-esteem, desire to work, and ability to find meaningful employment. Fund-raising activities can occur on a monthly basis with each vocational training area participating periodically. Banquets and recognition assemblies can be scheduled at the end of each training period. Graduation services should be held each quarter to allow students who complete training to return for the ceremony.

Considerations

1. The primary concern of vocational program staff using social prestige as a recruitment practice with disadvantaged, unemployed, out-of-school youth is the inability of some youth to relate the reward system to real-life situations after they leave the program. Awards and recognition are used to increase interest in the program and motivate students to succeed.

Recommendations

1. Care must be taken to make certain that students realize that in the "real world" not every accomplishment is recognized by others and rewarded. Program personnel mentioned that students often expect unrealistically high salaries and are disappointed with entry-level pay. As a result, students may have to create their own personal reward system as a motivating force to aid them in making a smooth transition into their roles as employees and adult members of the community. Positive results of using rewards to motivate students in vocational programs include the following:
   - Increased numbers of students volunteering for community activities and self-help programs
   - Greater student/teacher cooperation
   - Improvements in student leadership and human relations skills
   - Strengthened self-confidence, self-esteem, and commitment of students.



CHAPTER 3

Counseling

III. COUNSELING

The role of counseling in vocational training programs for disadvantaged, unemployed, out-of-school youth is being viewed increasingly as a crucial part of such training programs. Counseling derives its importance from the impact it has on the preparation of youth for employment.

This section describes counseling practices which are being used effectively with disadvantaged, unemployed, out-of-school youth in vocational training. The counseling practices outlined include the following:

- intake
- assessment and information sharing
- orientation
- monitoring and support during training
- job readiness
- follow-up

Descriptions of each practice include *what* is done in putting the practice into operation, *how* it can be done, and *when* it can be done.

Implementing the counseling practices described in this manual requires knowledge of the concerns identified through conversations with vocational program staff. Similarly, ways in which the barriers to implementing counseling practices can be overcome were also identified during conversations with vocational program staff. These concerns and suggestions for overcoming barriers are included in the "considerations" and "recommendations" sections which appear at the end of the description of each practice.

This section includes information obtained from numerous sources—conversations with personnel during vocational program site visits, feedback from practitioners in the field, and reviews of related research.

Intake

Entering the Program

What is done? Staff members work individually with clients to accomplish a number of objectives. These include establishing a positive relationship with clients and making sure that the necessary forms for entrance into the program are completed.

How is it done? Working on a one-to-one basis, counselors try to ensure that the client's first exposure to the program and staff is a positive experience. The client will be in close contact with many of the staff members during his/her stay in the program. It is important that the initial contact leave the client with perceptions of the program as worthwhile and the staff as caring and helpful.

Many potential clients are not ready to participate in a training program at the time they initiate the intake process due to problems which need to be resolved first. It is important to establish a relationship with the client who may not be ready for program participation so that the client feels the door to the program remains open. Skillful and sincerely concerned intake counseling can help him/her recognize the situation, point out strategies for problem resolution, and still see to it that the potential client will feel good about returning to the intake site when the time is right. Many counselors maintain helping relationships with potential clients while they are overcoming barriers to entering training even though such additional responsibilities are not necessarily within the parameters of their job descriptions.

Another objective staff members accomplish by intake counseling is to facilitate the completion of the necessary forms. The paperwork needed to certify place of residence, determine eligibility (as in the case of CETA-funded programs), and apply for the program can be overwhelming to the disadvantaged young person who may have very poor reading and comprehension skills and who may reject the program for that reason alone. For this reason, it is important that the client receive the support and encouragement of an understanding counselor.

When is it done? Intake counseling is so labeled because it occurs at the initial point of contact between the potential program participant and the program and its staff.

Considerations

1. The location of the intake site is often viewed as a barrier to the intake process.
   - Centralization of the intake process may pose transportation problems for potential clients.
   - Location of the intake site in a neighborhood which causes potential clients to cross racially imposed boundaries will keep potential clients away.
   - Removal of the intake process from the program site may result in a lack of communication between intake and program personnel and in the failure of intake staff to provide adequate counseling and create satisfactory rapport with clients.
2. Another constraint on the intake process is the forms which have to be completed.
   - Some of the forms are too complex for potential clients with minimal reading and comprehension skills.
   - Some school personnel are reluctant to help students complete the forms.

Recommendations

1. Close working relationships between program personnel and intake staff members need to be established and maintained.
   - Decentralize the intake process and make it either program specific or located in an area easily accessible and familiar to potential clients.
   - Communication between program personnel and intake staff members can help intake staff prepare clients for the program by providing adequate and correct program information and by establishing positive feelings about the program and its staff.
2. The intake process would be more palatable to potential clients if the following could occur:
   - Establish and maintain good one-to-one relationships between program personnel and the school counselors who frequently work with students who are entering a training program.
   - Provide a staff member whose primary purpose is to assist students in the intake process.
   - Use paraprofessionals from the community to work with potential students in the intake process.
   - Provide both male and female vocational/career counselors to work with potential students.

Assessment and Information Sharing

Basic Academic Skills Assessment

What is done? Basic academic skills assessment provides program operators with information about the clients' basic skill levels. This information is essential to the decisions about a skill training program. In many cases, students are required to enroll in adult basic education (ABE) or General Education Development (GED) preparation classes in order to meet the academic requirements of the training programs they wish to enter.

Both the test administration site and the person or agency administering the test are peculiar to the particular program. In many instances the testing and interpretation are done by the staff of the program in which the student is enrolled. In other cases where the program contracts for CETA funding, the testing may be administered by Employment Services personnel, and the interpretation may be done by Employment Services or by the contractor's staff. In Work Experience, World of Work, and Youth Incentive Entitlement Project programs, program staff may do the testing either prior to or after the student's reenrollment in high school, or before the potential dropout becomes a dropout.

How is it done? Tests used differ among programs according to the clientele served and the information needs of program staff members. The instruments used to assess basic academic skills may include but are not limited to the following:

- General Aptitude Test Battery
- Wide Range Achievement Test
- California Achievement Test
- Iowa Silent Reader
- Adult Performance Level
- Porter Reading Test

When is it done? Since the primary purpose of basic academic skill assessment is program placement, it is conducted upon a client's entry into the program. However, in a number of programs, tests are also administered at various times during a student's tenure to measure progress and alter the student's education plan so that it addresses identified needs. Tests are also given at the end of some programs to measure student progress and to determine program effectiveness.

Schedules for administering tests are peculiar to individual programs. Since most of the programs surveyed operate on an open-entry/open-exit basis, the assessment process was reported as occurring on an almost daily basis. Students are tested as they seek participation in a training program and before they can be placed.

Vocational Aptitude and Interest Assessment

What is done? Vocational aptitude and interest assessment, like academic skills assessment, provides information which facilitates the accurate placement of clients in a skill training program. Ideally, clients are not placed in a training situation until they have had an opportunity to have the results of their tests interpreted to them and have begun to develop a realistic picture of what their capabilities are.

How is it done? Again, as in academic skills assessment, the assessment of vocational aptitudes and interests may be conducted elsewhere than at the program site and by other than program staff, depending on the particular program or CETA contractor. The following are among the instruments used in the assessment of vocational aptitudes and interests:

- Jewish Education Vocational Survey
- COATES
- Valpar
- Kuder
- SCII
- Quest
- Singer/Graflex Vocational Assessment

When is it done? Vocational aptitude and interest assessment, like basic academic skill assessment, is conducted during the initial stages of a student's participation in a program. Among the instruments used in the assessment of vocational aptitude and interest are Singer/Graflex, JEVS, COATES, Valpar, Kuder, SCII, and Quest.

Since most of the programs surveyed operate on an open-entry/open-exit basis, the assessment process occurs on an almost daily basis. As students seek participation in a training program and before they can be placed, they are tested.

Ideally, students are not placed in a training situation until they have had an opportunity to have the results of their tests interpreted to them and have begun to develop a realistic picture of what their capabilities are, to establish educational and employment goals, and to design a plan for the achievement of those goals.

Physical and Psychological Testing

What is done? In addition to administering tests to assess academic skills and vocational aptitudes and interests, a number of programs use physical and psychological testing to identify specific physical or psychological characteristics or disabilities which could serve as barriers to training, job placement, and retention. It is also the purpose of such testing to enable staff to deal with any such obstacles which might be identified. This may be done in-house if qualified staff are available, or clients may be referred to the appropriate agency which can provide services to offset the handicapping condition.

How is it done? Potential clients suspected of a disability during the intake process are referred to a private licensed psychologist for a battery of tests. The client may not be sent to a psychologist for testing if the disability is determined by a medical exam. The results of the tests are usually discussed with the clients by the testing psychologist and the program counselor. The determination is then made as to whether the disability is handicapping enough to prevent employment and, if so, whether the agency can provide services to offset the handicap.

When is it done? Physical or psychological testing is available for clients when a staff member or a consultant (medical or psychological) feels certain characteristics may exist which can only be revealed or verified through more in-depth testing. These tests, like the ones already discussed, are customarily administered at the time a client seeks to enroll in a program. However, it is also possible that the need for medical or psychological testing may not become apparent until after the client has been enrolled in a training program.

Counseling for Placement in a Training Program

What is done? Counseling for placement in a training program is a step which incorporates the information obtained from testing to work with the client toward a realistic and accurate decision about the kinds of skill training he/she wants. The counselor works with the client in a test interpretation mode and points out the implications of the test results on the client's choice of skill training programs and eventual jobs.

How is it done? In addition to the one-on-one interpretation of the results of the tests administered to determine basic academic skill levels, vocational aptitude and interest, and physical or psychological disabilities, many programs offer clients the opportunity to work in groups. These groups are offered in the early stages of program participation and before clients are placed in a training class. Their purpose is to facilitate through group process the clients' getting in touch with their own perceptions about certain occupations and about being members of the labor force. It also helps them to look at various aspects of their lives—family ties, financial burdens and expectations, self concept, cultural/ethnic heritage, educational background and aspirations—and identify the manner in which their choice of a career may be affected by any one of those aspects. The honesty (sometimes brutal) with which peers help each other look at themselves and their lives and goals often has a positive effect on the setting of realistic career goals and the development of a plan to achieve those goals.

When is it done? Counseling for placement in a training program generally occurs after a client has taken the prescribed tests to assess skills, aptitudes, and interests. There are, however, programs which begin the counseling for placement process prior to testing in order to identify the tests which will best assess the client's skills, aptitudes, and interests. Some of the counseling for placement may actually occur during the group orientation sessions.

Considerations

The following constraints were identified by program staff:

1. Clients are not convinced that the testing and counseling for placement are necessary—all they want is training and a job.

2. Limited funding contributes to the following:
   - Both the time and the space allocated for testing are limited.
   - The prescribed tests are not always precise enough to provide useful data.
   - The cost of consumable test materials is sometimes prohibitive.
   - Staff members are not always properly trained in the administration and interpretation of tests which are available (e.g., Singer-Graflex); consequently, equipment sits unused or test data are improperly interpreted.

Recommendations

Program staff view the following as ways in which the assessment and information-sharing efforts could be improved:

1. Counseling should be provided to new program participants which will make them aware of the importance of testing and effective counseling for program placement and of the implications testing and counseling have for their success in the training program.

2. Funding needs to be identified and allocated for
   - hiring staff qualified to administer and interpret tests;
   - training current staff to administer and interpret tests;
   - purchasing the tests and other materials best suited to program goals and client needs; and
   - providing materials to develop tests to meet needs of specific programs and clients.

Orienting New Students

What is done? The process of orienting new students to a training program is being used increasingly among service providers who recognize its importance in facilitating students' success in the program. Orientation is conducted to provide clients with an awareness of the process and content of the program and of what is expected of them as program participants. Discussions of work and related issues help clients begin to look at themselves in relation to the training program and to the world of work.

How is it done? There are a number of orientation strategies most of which involve working with participants in groups. Because the function of orientation is to provide information about the program to new participants, audiovisual aids are used extensively.

Many program operators regard orientation as a vehicle for getting participants involved in group activities designed to help them develop social interaction skills, become aware of themselves and others, and begin to identify their roles and responsibilities as program participants and eventually as members of the work force. To help break through the initial feelings of shyness and discomfort participants feel upon entering a program, staff may use icebreaker activities, role playing, simulations, and games. These activities are often designed around previous experiences with program participants which provide good material for role playing and simulations.

Orientation can hlep clients verbalize the rationale on which they based their choice of skill training. Many times the interaction which takes place in these particular sessions helps the clients see the gaps in their decision-making process. This may result in a new, wiser, more appropriate choice of training.

A number of resources have been identified for use with groups in orientation counseling.

- *Human Values in the Classroom* (Hart)
- *Deciding* (The College Board)
- *Helping Your Child Learn Right from Wrong* (McGraw-Hill)
- *Learning Discussion Skills Through Games* (Citation Press)
- *Personalizing Education* (Hart)
- *Schools Without Failure* (Harper & Row)
- *Search for Meaning* (Pflaum/Standard)
- *Search for Values* (Pflaum/Standard)
- *Stories With Holes* (Mandala)
- *Values Clarification* (Hart)

When is it done? Because of its intent, orientation is conducted at the time clients enter the program and before they begin specific skill training. Because orientation experiences frequently influence clients' final decisions about program participation, it is important that the information obtained during intake and from the assessment process be shared and accurately interpreted to the client for use in the decision-making process that may be a part of orientation.

Some others aspects of the orientation process (interpersonal relations skills, life survival skills, decision making, and problem solving) are frequently dealt with as skill training progresses. This is often done in groups, but it may be done individually as student needs become apparent.

Considerations

Program staff identified the following concerns related to the orientation of new program participants:

1. There are not enough staff members to carry the daily workload and conduct an effective orientation program.

2. Student participation in orientation is constrained by the attitudes of parents and families toward the program.

3. There is no money budgeted for purchase of books, film rental, and field trips for the orientation program.

Recommendations

Recommendations for increasing the effectiveness of orientation for new program participants were made by program staff.

1. Supplement limited staff.
   - Involve current students in the orientation program to function as peer counselors.
   - Identify and use volunteers from the community as appropriate to the goals of the orientation program.

2. Increase level of student participation.
   - Provide group orientation for students' parents and families so they can understand the training program, know what the students are going through, and not obstruct their progress.
   - Include a tour of program facilities so new students can see what the total program is like and can talk to current program participants.

3. Provide funding for supplies and equipment which would upgrade the quality and effectiveness of the program.

Monitoring and Support During Training

Most program operators place a high priority on the practices which constitute monitoring and support during training. The practices derive importance from their role in making it possible for students to deal with problems which would stand in the way of their completing training and becoming employed.

Supportive Counseling

What is done? Supportive counseling for program success takes a number of forms, may occur in a variety of places, and involves different staff members in different roles. Because unemployed out-of-school youth often have not developed the skills to deal with situations which may develop and act as barriers to training and employment, program staff work with participants individually and in groups to develop the skills necessary for survival both in and out of the training program and on and off the job.

How is it done? One method of monitoring participant progress is to establish and maintain close contact with the instructor so that problems which arise in the area of attendance, punctuality, quality of work, social interaction, attitude, and dress may be dealt with as soon as they become apparent rather than after they reach crisis proportions. Worthy of note is the fact that much of the counseling at this level is provided by the classroom instructor because of close daily contact with the student and the rapport which is developed. If the problematic situation and its possible solution are beyond the purview of the instructor, the student is referred to the appropriate staff member.

In dealing with some students the counselor also acts in a referral capacity to help the student obtain legal, medical, dental, welfare, social, or psychological assistance. Students are frequently assisted in identifying and contacting the community resources which can appropriately work toward problem solution.

Program staff who find it necessary to make many referrals to other social service agencies frequently compile a directory which includes a list of such agencies, the services provided, address, telephone number, and the name of a contact person at the agency with whom they have established a cooperative relationship.

Another way program staff provide counseling services is by making scheduled visits to on-the-job training work sites. This practice has to be handled very carefully and should not represent a nuisance to the employer or job-site supervisor. Rather, the staff member should approach the employer from the very positive stance of being available to work with the student and the employer in the best interests of both. This has worked excellently in many programs because of the positive approach of the program staff member and the rapport established with the employer's staff.

In one program surveyed, the director was able to hire two part-time staff members to work as student advocates. Those individuals made it their responsibility to have personal and telephone contact with each student at least once a week and to have conferences with instructors once a week to discuss student progress and problems. The purpose of these contacts was to establish a relationship with students so they would feel comfortable about discussing concerns, successes, and problems with the advocates and so students would seek the advocates' help in resolving whatever problems might arise. Students were encouraged to seek help from the advocates whenever necessary.

Because of their weekly telephone calls, the advocates often found themselves in conversation with the parents of students. Information gained through those conversations helped the advocate and often lead to cooperation between advocate and parent in the best interest of the student. The advocates worked with students to help them overcome barriers that might prevent them from completing training. They helped students deal with problems that ranged from locating a quiet place to study, to finding transportation to and from classes, or finding a babysitter.

One counselor in a work experience program was able to monitor students' progress on the job by having them maintain a weekly log of their activities, perceptions, and reactions to things that happened to them at the job site. The counselor established the outline for the open-ended log entries and collected the logs every Friday. The logs were reviewed over the weekend and any problems requiring immediate attention at the work site were addressed on Monday. Many student concerns could be addressed in the next class session. More personal problems were handled by the counselor and the individual student.

Another program emphasizes a field-based mode of work for its student advocates. Staff members spend more time in the community, at the work sites, in home visitation, and in the school or training site than behind their desks. The program coordinator believes that this enables them to assume a posture which is more proactive than reactive in their efforts to develop trained and employable persons from the ranks of the disadvantaged, unemployed, out-of-school youth in their community.

When is it done? Monitoring and supportive counseling must occur on a continuing basis throughout a student's participation in a training program. Many of the activities can be scheduled to occur on a daily, weekly, or bi-weekly basis. Others can occur only on an as-needed basis in response to needs of a student, instructor, or job supervisor.

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Tutoring for Test Awareness

What is done? As a prerequisite to entering a vocational training program, some programs provide tutoring in test-taking skills. Called "tutoring for test awareness," these activities are conducted primarily in programs which provide GED preparation and work in an alternative high school setting.

How is it done? In order to help students overcome test anxiety which may render them powerless in a real testing situation, program staff members administer timed practice tests to students on an established schedule (e.g., once a week or once every two weeks). As students increase their test awareness and learn how to take tests, their fear of testing is reduced and their chances of success increase.

When is it done? Tutoring for test awareness occurs before students are tested for their eligibility to enter a vocational training program. It may also be included as a part of an alternative high school program in an effort to increase students' chances of success.

Considerations

A number of factors were identified as barriers to the success of program staff in providing supportive counseling services to program participants.

1. There is a lack of communication and understanding between program counselors and classroom instructors especially when training is provided in a public school facility.

2. Student background and family history frequently make it difficult to help students break out of a pattern of failure and become employable.

3. Staff do not always have the knowledge of community resources which can provide counseling in some of the areas necessary to make students employable.

4. Students' emergencies (e.g., transportation, day care, unexpected financial crises) interfere with their ability to continue in the program.

Recommendations

To overcome barriers to offering services to students, program staff members made the following recommendations:

1. Develop good one-to-one working relationships between program staff and classroom instructors and counselors in public school facilities.

2. Establish rapport and program credibility with students' families and members of the community at large by keeping program counseling staff in the field as much as possible and sharing in community activities.

3. Identify volunteers from the community who have the required expertise to conduct counseling sessions which respond to a variety of student needs.

4. Provide assistance to students with special needs.
   - Establish and maintain linkages with identified community social service agencies (e.g., medical, dental, legal aid, child care) which can help meet student needs.
   - Appropriate money for use in the event of student financial emergencies.

Developing Employability

What is done? Job readiness counseling helps prepare students for employment, i.e., it helps make them employable. The quality of employability as it is used here refers to all of the qualities that make a person employable (in addition to job skills). A wide variety of job readiness activities may be offered.

How is it done? In the programs surveyed, staff handle job readiness counseling in group settings. Topics studied include job application forms and procedures, resumes, job interviews, interpersonal communication skills, assertiveness training, problem solving, decision making, personal and family health and nutrition, home management and child care, consumer economics, and knowledge and use of community resources.

One counselor uses input from intake sessions and information from teachers to identify student needs. The group counseling sessions are then designed to meet those identified needs. Twelve students are invited to participate in the sessions which are scheduled to meet three hours a week for a minimum of twelve weeks. Students working on an alternative high school diploma are required to meet for twelve weeks in order to earn ¼ credit toward the diploma. In order to meet the needs (absence, illness, etc.) of those students, the sessions may run longer than twelve weeks. The popularity of the sessions is attested to by those students who come back for the extended sessions even after they have completed their required number of sessions. Sessions include the use of the Singer Job Survival Skills Program, role playing, simulation, games, video taping and replay for critique, film strips and slide tape presentations.

One counselor in a fairly large program conducts a job fair. Representatives from sixty businesses, the armed services, and colleges set up booths and make information available to students. Students learn about the kinds of job opportunities available to them as well as the requirements of various jobs.

One program enlisted the help of a drama coach to help a group of ten Summer Program for Economically Disadvantaged Youth (SPEDY) participants develop a skit on job interview skills. The skit was presented to several groups of students in the consortium and proved to be a highly successful vehicle for increasing students' interview skills and heightening their interest in the entire job readiness arena.

When is it done? Most of the programs surveyed incorporated job readiness activities throughout the course of a student's participation in the program. However, there are those which offer highly concentrated three- to five-day sessions in specific job seeking, interviewing, and resume writing skills near the end of a student's program involvement. Those programs may also offer group sessions which deal with other aspects of employability at other times during a student's stay in the program.

Considerations

The effectiveness of job readiness counseling is constrained by several factors, many of which were identified in the sections on monitoring and support during training and orientation. Additional factors are listed below.

1. Counselor time, resources, and knowledge are often limited and cannot meet the various needs of all students.

2. Students have very low self-esteem and unrealistic job expectations. They have an inappropriate work ethic and poor interpersonal, coping, and survival skills.

Recommendations

In order to increase the effectiveness of job readiness counseling, the following were recommended by program staff:

1. Identify and use staff from social service agencies (e.g., mental health, drug and alcohol counseling centers, extension service nutrition specialists) who can provide group learning experiences for students without requiring reimbursement from program funds.

2. Provide program services to develop students' employability.
   - Identify programs which have been developed specifically for meeting the job readiness needs of disadvantaged, undereducated youth.
   - Develop materials and strategies which can be effective with the target population.

Maintaining Contact With Students

What is done? Programs which receive CETA funds are mandated to conduct thirty-, sixty-, and ninety-day follow-up on program completers. However, this is too often a compliance function for the purpose of collecting numbers to support continued program funding and does not usually provide students with follow-up counseling designed to help them adjust to the work world.

Follow up is also used to help assess the effectiveness of their training. The results of follow-up contact with employers are used to improve the training program design.

Follow-up reportedly done for the purpose of maintaining a helping relationship with students was conducted informally and not necessarily as a part of the counselor's job responsibilities.

How is it done? Most counselors reported making concentrated efforts to maintain an open door for students who had completed the training program and obtained a job so that students would always feel free to come back and visit or get assistance as they needed it.

Beyond that, a few counselors maintain contact with employers on a fairly regular basis both as a public relations medium and to keep informed about the students. Many employers also initiate contact with the program staff to report on a student's success or to seek help if problems arise.

One counselor asks students to call or come by to talk if they are thinking of quitting a job. This gives the counselor the opportunity to offer another perspective on the problem. Help in locating another job may also be offered.

The provision of follow-up counseling is not systematic and is not ordinarily within the purview of program staff members. There are, however, a number of programs whose staff members are successful in maintaining contact with participants after they complete their training and in providing follow-up counseling services as they are needed. This is usually true not because it is a planned part of the total program operation, but because the staff members are truly committed to the participants and to their success in becoming employable and well-adjusted members of society.

When is it done? Follow-up counseling, as the name implies, is done after a student has completed a program and has obtained a job or moved on to more advanced training.

Considerations

The following were identified as constraints to providing good follow-up to disadvantaged youth who have completed or dropped out of a vocational training program:

1. Staff members do not have time to conduct in-depth follow-up of program completers beyond what is required by the Department of Labor.

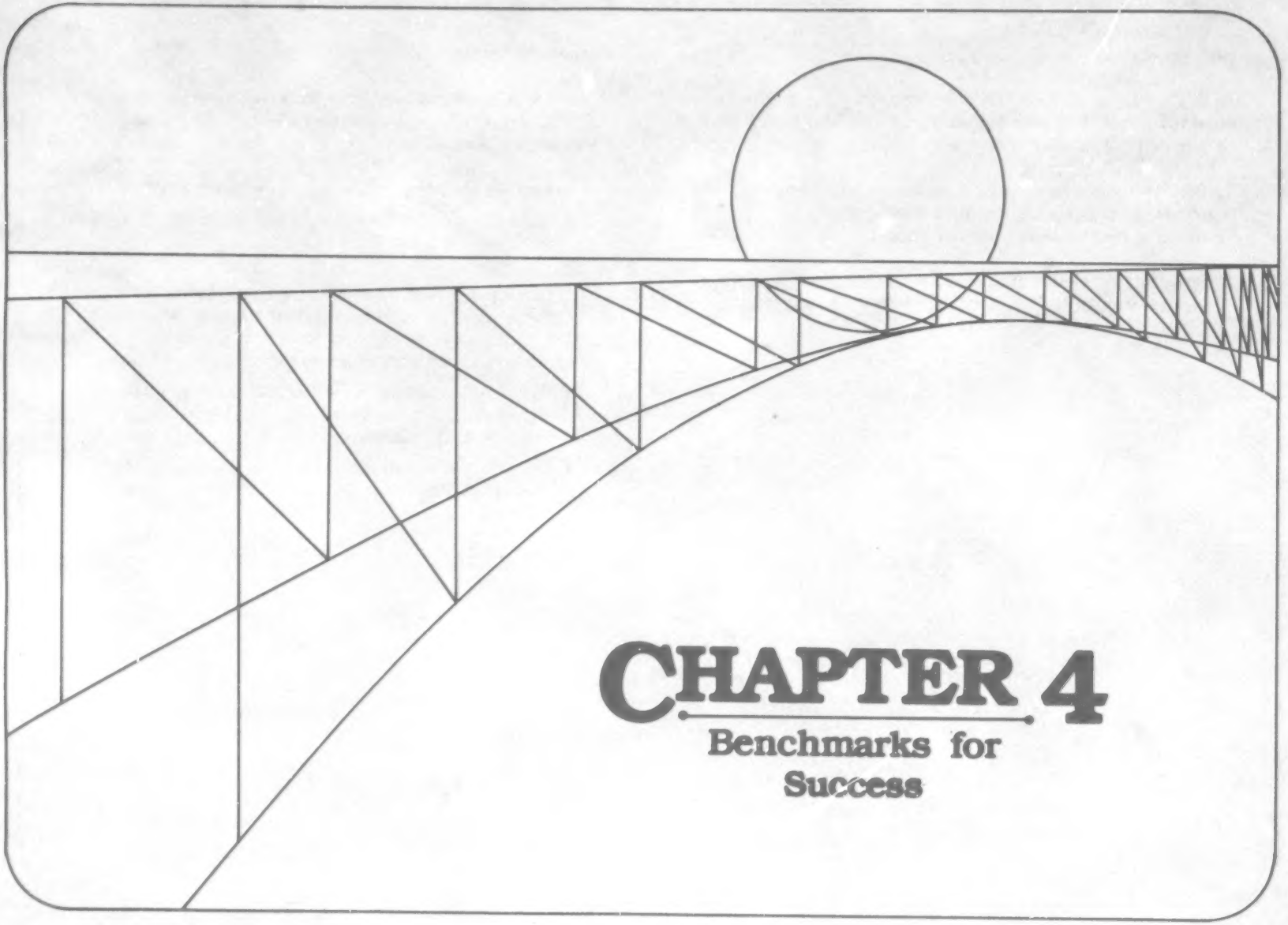
2. Program completers are often hard to locate--they do not always want to maintain contact with the program.

Recommendations

The following are program staff recommendations for enhancing the follow-up efforts of a vocational training program for disadvantaged youth:

1. Encourage staff to provide follow-up counseling.
   - Make follow-up a part of staff responsibilities and allow time and resources for it.
   - Develop a plan for conducting follow-up with program participants who drop out of the program as well as those who successfully complete the program.

2. Maintain contact with program completers and leavers.
   - Work with students while they are in the program to encourage them to maintain contact with staff after they complete training.
   - Develop good relationships with employers to help counselors stay in contact with students who are employed.



CHAPTER 4

Benchmarks for Success

IV. BENCHMARKS FOR SUCCESS

Evaluation is an essential part of all activities. In addition to measuring success or failure, it also serves as a planning tool. Staff measure their success by how near they come to reaching program goals and objectives. Students measure their success according to the degree to which they achieve their goals.

Program staff use a variety of measures to evaluate success. These measures range from a very statistical analysis that is formally acquired to many informal indicators reflecting the affective domain. The following are some reference points or benchmarks by which student and program success are measured:

Student Success

Formal

- Improved class attendance
- Progress in course work at a higher level
- Positive decisions about participation in the world of work
- Higher salary rates of those placed on the job
- Increased numbers of program completers
- Incentive to pursue vocational goals

Informal

- Encourage friends to enroll in the program
- Speak highly of training
- Return to training site to socialize with staff and students
- Students serve as recruiters for training site
- Employers express satisfaction with work habits

Program Success

Formal

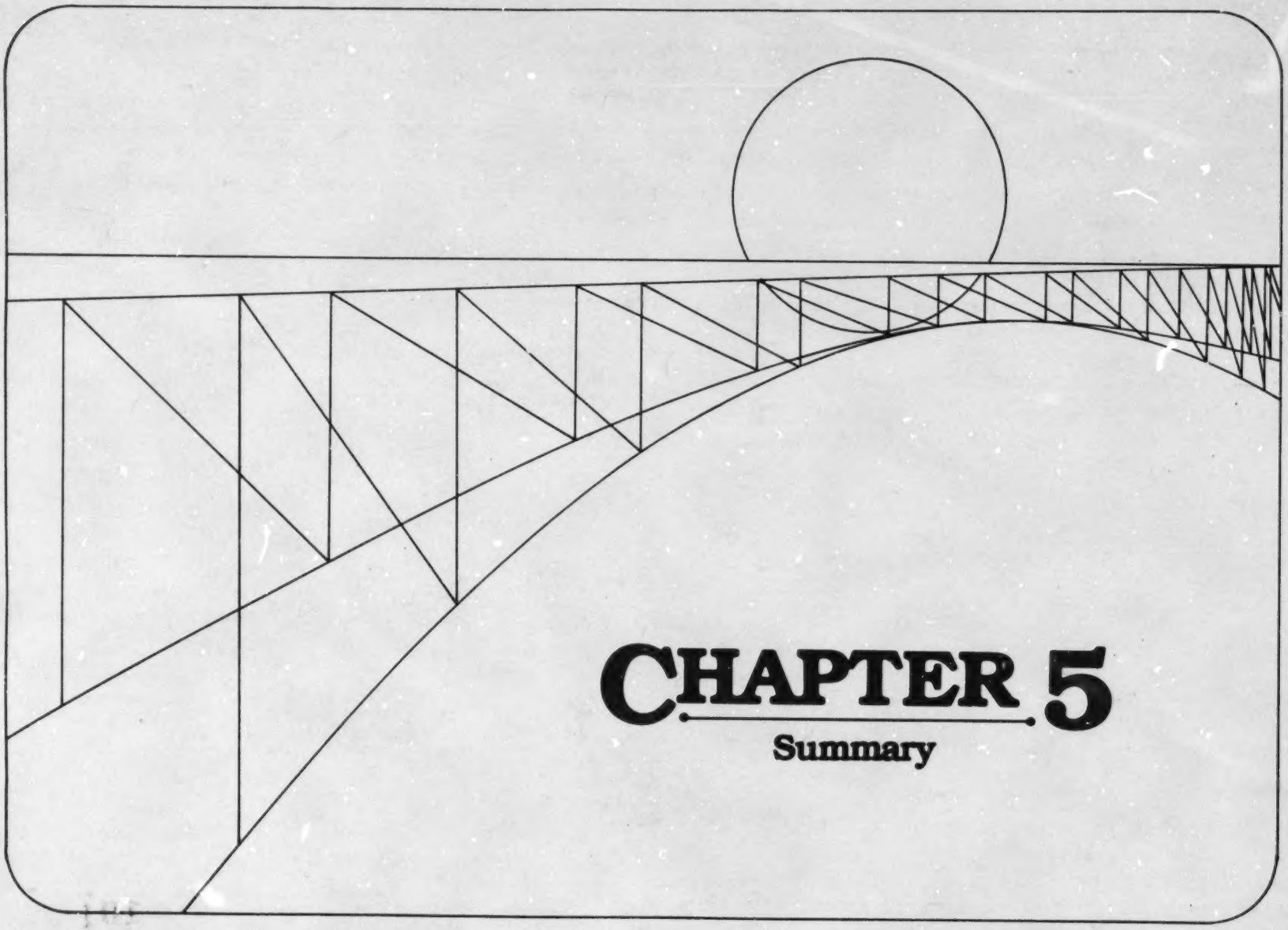
- Increased student enrollments
- Number of applications on file for program entry
- Number of walk-ins to program
- Students' praise of counseling sessions on coping and life skills (parenting, substance abuse, home management, and nutrition)
- Increased interpersonal communication skills of students
- Students assume responsibility by reporting absences, displaying initiative and interest in completing work assignments
- Daily and weekly evaluation reports from counselors and teachers
- Completion of student individualized work plans (IWP)
- Feedback from referral agencies
- Improvement on post-test scores from pre-test scores
- Number of program completers
- Continued contact between program completers and vocational staff
- Number of students obtaining high school diplomas or GED certificates
- Number of program completers going on to postsecondary education (junior colleges, universities, vocational/technical schools)
- Number of program completers joining the armed forces
- Number of students placed on jobs
- Students' ability to perform at worksites
- Length of time program completers remain on the job
- Continued funding level sources for the program (federal, state, local)
- Increased program funding
- Annual payback to economy versus cost to government

Informal

- Student satisfaction with the program
- Positive attitude changes in students
- Improved self-concept and confidence of students
- Ability of students to handle future problems successfully
- Positive program staff relationships with students
- Better community understanding of the program and its goals and objectives
- Positive relationships with the community developed during the history of the program
- Employer satisfaction with the program

If vocational educators are to be successful in working with the target population, there are some truisms with which they must concern themselves. They can do a great deal to help disadvantaged, unemployed, out-of-school youth to increase their chances for obtaining meaningful work if they are aware of the following factors:

- Disadvantaged, unemployed, out-of-school youth lack basic skills.
- "Walk-ins" have more problems because they are least stable and most in need of extensive support systems.
- Potential students and their parents have difficulty completing application forms for entry into vocational programs.
- Potential students do not follow up on scheduled appointments.
- Regular secondary vocational programs are not viewed as meeting the occupational needs of disadvantaged, unemployed, out-of-school youth.
- Educators with liberal arts backgrounds do not view vocational education with the same esteem and prestige as do vocational educators.
- Lag time between students' leaving traditional programs and their identification of and entry into another training situation results in their being lost to the system.
- Recruits may be "lost" if they are thwarted on their first attempt to see a program staff person.
- Disadvantaged, unemployed youth may lose interest if they are not involved in relevant activities that expand their potential.



CHAPTER 5

Summary

V. SUMMARY

In conclusion, we recognize that funding is always important, but the most important element or ingredient is the individual staff person and the honesty, concern, empathy, and understanding he or she displays for the student. Program staff who are concerned about students, competent in their abilities to operate a vocational program, and responsible and willing to go beyond the call of duty to serve the needs of students seem to be the key to effective use of recruitment and counseling practices with the target population.

The responsibility for recruitment and counseling of students need not be restricted to any particular staff members such as teachers *or* counselors. The tasks should be performed by all staff who can feel comfortable in the role and who have the ability to make students feel comfortable. Disadvantaged, unemployed, out-of-school youth represent a new type of student in vocational education—a population that is increasing in number and one which vocational educators must be prepared to serve.

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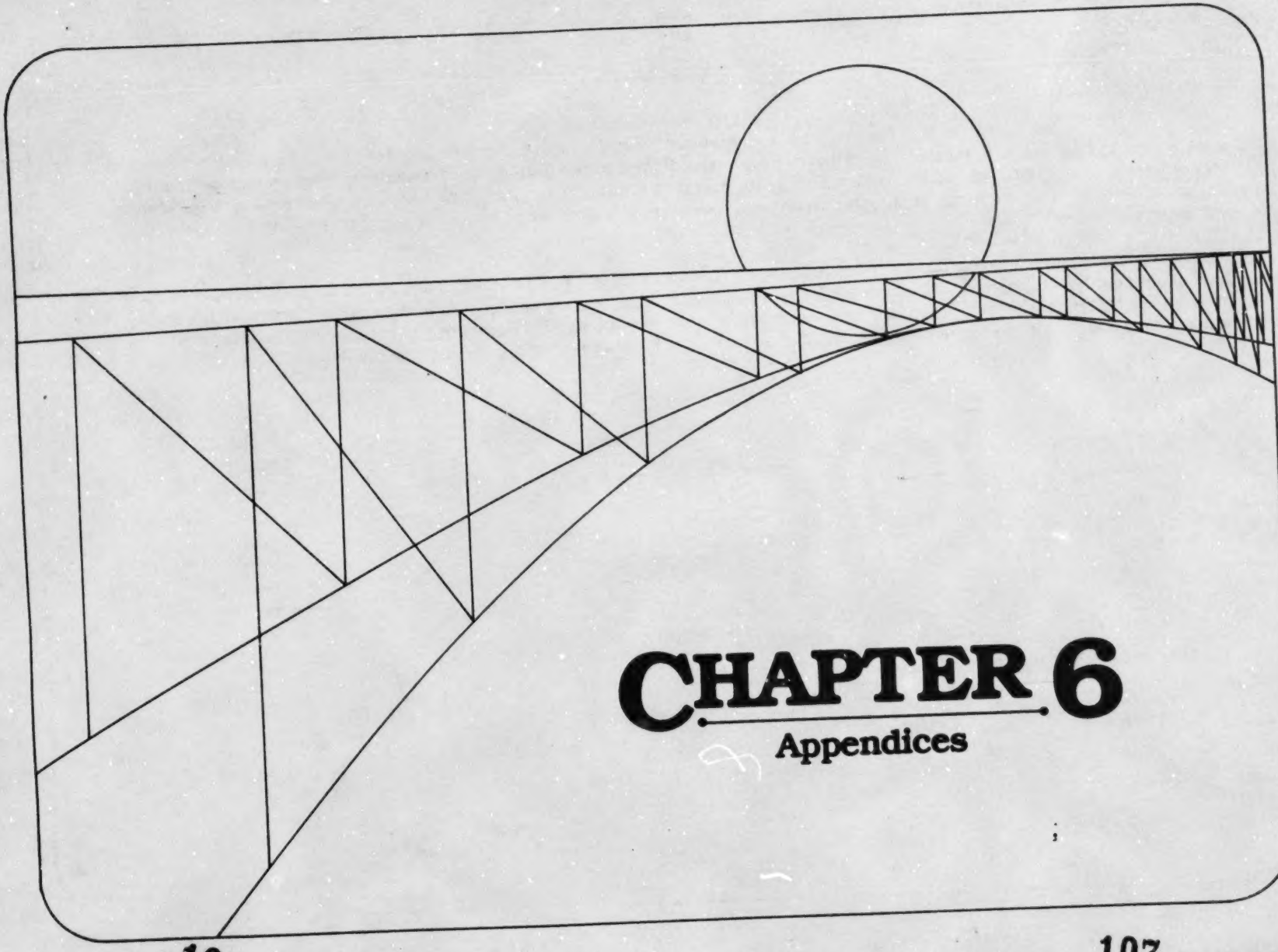

CHAPTER 6

Appendices

VI. APPENDICES

The appendices are included in this manual as an aid to readers who would like to get further insight into the area of vocational education for disadvantaged, unemployed, out-of-school youth. A list of readings provides a variety of sources for those readers interested in reviewing the related research. The program listing by state includes the fourteen vocational programs visited by the authors of this manual. These programs were identified by advisory panel members, consultants, and other persons involved in vocational education throughout the country. The programs are examples of a variety of vocational programs that recruit and counsel disadvantaged, unemployed, out-of-school youth. The list included in this manual is a resource for those readers who may want to contact practitioners who work with unemployed youth. Unfortunately, time and funding constraints limited the number of sites that could be visited.

APPENDIX A:

Further Readings

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APPENDIX B:

A Chronological List of Federal Legislation

Area Redevelopment Act of 1961. Public Law 87-27, May 1, 1961.

Manpower Development and Training Act of 1962. Public Law 87-415, March 15, 1962.

1963 Amendments to the Manpower Development and Training Act of 1962. Public Law 88-214, December 19, 1963.

Vocational Education Act of 1963. Public Law 88-210, December 18, 1963.

Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. Public Law 88-452, August 20, 1964.

Social Security Act of 1967. Public Law 90-248, January 2, 1968.

1968 Amendments to the Vocational Education Act of 1963. Public Law 90-576, October 16, 1968.

Adult Education Act of 1970. Public Law 91-230, April 13, 1970.

Comprehensive Employment and Training Act of 1973. Public Law 93-203, December 28, 1973.

Education Amendments of 1976. Public Law 94-482, October 12, 1976.

Youth Employment and Demonstration Projects Act of 1977. Public Law 95-93, August 5, 1977.

1978 Amendments to the Comprehensive Employment Training Act of 1973. Public Law 95-524, October 27, 1978.

Educational Amendments of 1978. Public Law 95-561, November 1, 1978.

APPENDIX C:

Program Listing by State

DELAWARE

Project 70,001 Ltd.
1703 School Lane
Marshallton School
Wilmington, DE 19808

Contact Person:
Joe Potochney
District Program Supervisor

Wilmington Skills Center
1401 Market Street
Wilmington, DE 19801

Contact Persons:
Joseph Mozzani, Principal
Barbara Walker, Job Developer

KANSAS

Career Opportunity Center
2542 Junction Road
Kansas City, KS 66106

Contact Person:
Carolyn Conklin, Director

J.D. Harmon High School
World of Work Program
2400 Steele Road
Kansas City, KS 66106

Contact Person:
Octavia Pleas, Coordinator

MARYLAND

National Association of Trade and Technical Schools
MEDIX School
21 West Road
Baltimore, MD 21204

Contact Person:
Jack Tolbert, President

NEW JERSEY

Center for Occupational Education and Demonstration
223 Broadway
Newark, NJ 07104

Contact Person:
Richard Phillips, Director

PENNSYLVANIA

Old Bedford Village
P. O. Box 1976
Rd. 1
Bedford, PA 15522

Contact Person:
Robert Sweet, Director

Pennsylvania continued

Academic Credit for Work Experience Project
Front and Duncan Streets
Philadelphia, PA 19120

Contact Person:
Mitchell Voron, Program Director

Academy for Career Education
Front and Duncan Streets
Philadelphia, PA 19120

Contact Persons:
Robert Rabinowitz, Director
Carolyn Brooks, Teacher/Counselor

Youth Employment Training Program
219 North Broad
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Contact Person:
Elizabeth Thorne, Director

Youth Incentive Entitlement Project
219 North Broad
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Contact Person:
Jim McMillan, Director

Pennsylvania continued

Project Advantage
Connelley Skills Center
1501 Bedford Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Contact Persons:
Savero Dongiovanni, Principal
Beverly Hope, Program Coordinator

Interim Youth Employment and
Training Program
Box 37
342 Pine Street
Williamsport, PA 17701

Contact Persons:
Dave Franklin, Director
Barbara Erhard, Program Manager

TEXAS

S. E. R.
Dallas Jobs for Progress, Inc.
2514 Harry Hines Blvd.
Dallas, TX 75201

Contact Person:
Meredith Swackhammer, Assistant Director